



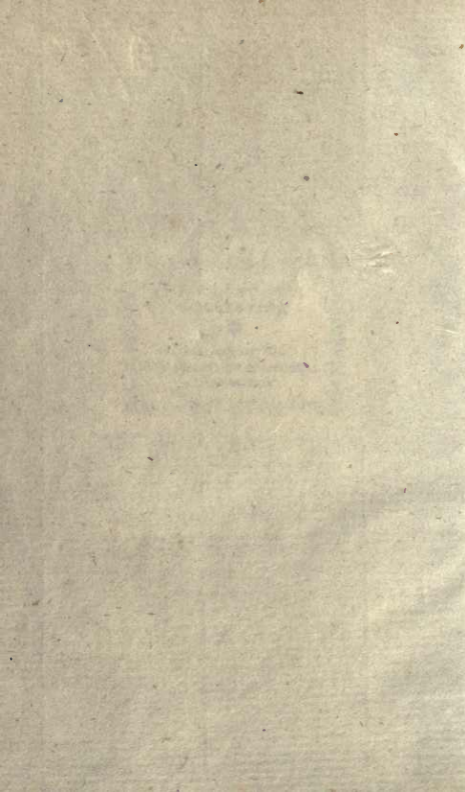
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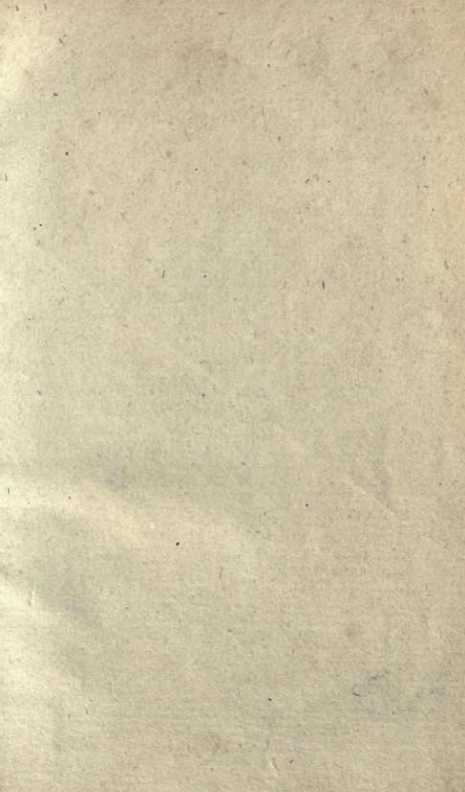
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Published by Lackington, Allen & Co 27th April 1801.

KAMOULA, FORCED INTO THE CAVE.

THE
ADVENTURES
OF
K A M O U L A,
THE
Lovely Arabian;

—♦—
OR,
A VINDICATION
OF THE
WAYS OF PROVIDENCE,

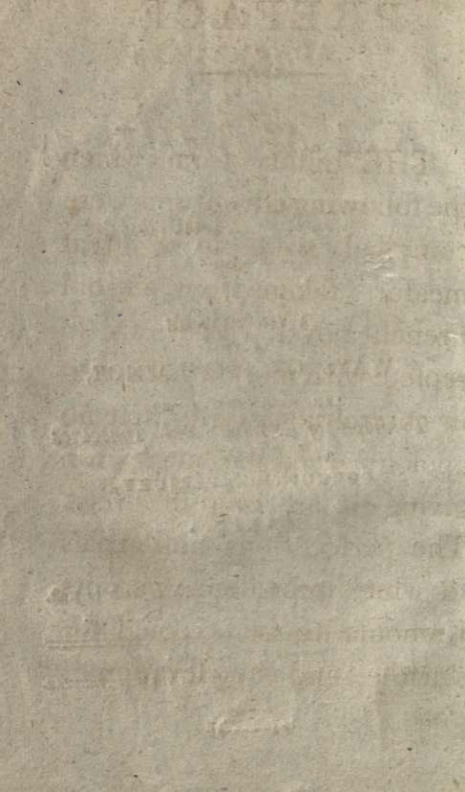
EXEMPLIFIED IN THE
Triumph of Virtue and Innocence
OVER
CORRUPTION, PERJURY,
AND
MALICE.

—♦—
And where you can't unriddle, learn to trust.
Dr. Parnel.

Printed by J. S. Hollis, Romsey;

FOR LACKINGTON, ALLEN, and Co., TEMPLE OF THE MUSES, FINSBURY-
SQUARE, LONDON.

—♦—
M, DCCC, I.



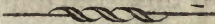
PREFACE.



THE history from which the following adventures were compiled were in a great measure taken from an old French novel. They are so replete with morality and rich in interesting events that no apology need be made for giving it an English dress. The persecutions and trials to which providence permits Kamoula to be exposed for a while, and the elevation of

fortune which is at length the reward of her humble resignation to the will of Heaven, furnish the most instructive moral; and cannot fail strongly to incline the reader to the love of God, and resignation to his unfearchable providence.

THE
ADVENTURES
OF
KAMOULA.



THE faithful historian Osman, in his history of Arabia, writes, that the daughter of Redi Sanaam, who was the chief of a tribe, was an orphan at the age of seventeen. Her beauty was equalled by her wisdom, and both exceeded whatever had appeared in the
B world

world before. She was blessed from her early infancy with the precious gifts of prayer and meditation : her soul was adorned with a pure and perfect modesty, which gave a lustre to all her actions, surpassing that which the morning dew spreads over the fairest fruits and flowers.

Kanoula was the name of this matchless virgin ; her mother died a few days after her birth.

Her father Redi Sanaan, notwithstanding the deep grief he felt for the loss of a wife who was very dear to him, survived her two hundred and twenty one moons,* which time he spent in exercises of piety and in gradually instilling into his daughter's mind those

virtues

* A period answering to seventeen years ; the Arabians always reckon their time by moons.

virtues which his family had inherited for two centuries. When this holy man was called from the painful pilgrimage of this life, to receive the reward of his virtues in the mansions of the blessed, Kamoula raising her hands to Heaven, thus addressed the most high.

“O Almighty ! Thou comfort and hope of the afflicted ! Thou protector and guardian of innocence ! Vouchsafe to look down on the humble creature that presumes to call upon thee : Thou hast been pleased to separate me from my father, but he enjoyed the fulness of thy mercies ; I adore the dispensations of thy divine providence ; the bitterness of my affliction is drowned in the satisfaction I feel from submission

and resignation to thy holy will; I desire none of the dazzling wordly goods of which the sons and daughters of Adam are so fond; I only beg of thee, O my God, to put a strong barrier of thorns between thy weak servant, and whatever temptations may lead her from the paths of innocence and virtue."

Six moons had been spent by Kamoula after the death of her father, in her accustomed exercises of devotion, and the reputation of her virtue had spread far and near, when Nadir Shan a rich Arabian lord, came to demand her in marriage, followed by a numerous and magnificent train of attendants.

An hundred slaves conducted twelve sumptuous waggons; forty camels were laden with tents and costly furniture; and

and sixty cavaliers mounted on proud courfers of the moft noble breed of Arabia, guarded the caravan.

The wife and modeft Kamoula was not in the leaft dazzled either with the fplendid equipage, or the gallant air of her lover, whofe amiable countenance, and majestic ftature, as far eclipsed the fineft men of Arabia, as the ftately tulip, clad in a thoufand beautiful colours, out-fhines the humble daify.

Kamoula never ceafed begging the moft high to defend her from the imperceptible and deadly arrow, which finds a paffage to the heart through the eyes; ſhe would not receive or permit the addreffes of Nadir Shan, untill ſhe was thoroughly informed of his manners and character.

She therefore consulted all who could give her information on this most interesting subject. In this enquiry, she learned that Nadir Shan universally bore the character of a man strictly attached to his duty: That he had been a dutiful son, was a good neighbour, and a sincere friend; that he was mild and courteous in society, although brave in battle; that he was very charitable to the poor, a constant frequenter of the mosques, and let what would happen, performed the ablutions ordered by Mahomed; that he wore holy* amulets and relicks about him, had the Alcoran by heart, and knew all the orisons and hymns made in praise of the most high and his prophet: And though not forty years old,

* This is one mark amongst the Mahometans of their being good mussulmen.

old, he had been three times in pilgrimage to Mecca. In short she heard so many honourable things of him, that she did not in the least doubt of his being appointed by the Almighty for her husband. She therefore did not hesitate to give him her hand, and the nuptials were solemnized with all imaginable splendour and pomp, and once at least, a pair was seen so excellently well matched, that none could make the least objection to the union. A few weeks after their marriage, Kamoula disposed of her father's patrimony, and went to reside at her husband's palace, where they passed six moons in innocence and pleasure; they were always together, and never weary of each others company.

Man, the offspring of sin, may indeed have some happiness in this world, but they alone enjoy lasting felicity, who, under the eyes of the prophet*, walk on the stars. The importance of some affairs in Egypt obliged Nadir Shan to quit his beloved spouse for a while, and travel into that country. However, the hopes of soon meeting again, and the mutual confidence they had in each other, a little alleviated the pangs of their separation.

Their parting was tender and affectionate. I go my dearest Kamoula, says he, and so great is my grief at bidding you farewell, that my soul is ready to break out at my lips. Take courage my dear Nadir she replies; go; I shall
never

* An Arabian expression, signifying those who lead a virtuous life.

never lose sight of thee, I shall talk to thee night and day ; for a thirty thousand days journey cannot separate two hearts united as ours are. They embraced tenderly, and Nadir vaulting on his fleet courser, disappeared like a flash of lightening.

Now it was, that the resolution of Kamoula gave way to the exquisite sensibility of her nature ; she sunk between the arms of her slaves, into a fainting fit, which became the cruel and fatal source of all the distressing and dreadful trials to which her virtue was to be exposed.

Shanadki, the brother of Nadir, had been appointed by him to take care of his house and affairs during his absence. He was witness to Kamoula's fainting ; he

attentively beheld her in that disorder in which her beauty as if wrapped up in the thin crape of sleep, appeared but more dangerous: the first looks he gave her were guided by an innocent unheaviness: he assisted her, pressed her hands, and sprinkled her face with rose water: she opened her languishing eyes; her colour returned, and her cheeks were instantly covered with that lively vermilion, which ought to honour the face of every chaste woman, when she is seen in such circumstances by any man but her husband.

Shanadki in whose heart a small spark had kindled up a general flame, cast a curious and guilty eye on his sister. He endeavoured to draw out the poisoned arrow with which he was wounded,

wounded, and passed several days without ever seeing Kamoula; but the venom had spread too far to be stopped, and boiling through all his veins, he was seized with a furious transport; he flew to her chamber, where finding her alone, he threw himself at her feet, he embraced her knees, and made an open declaration of his detestable passion, but in terms likelier to shock even vice itself than to seduce virtue.

Kamoula as much irritated as surprised, had power enough over herself to dissemble a part of that indignation which his conduct had so justly merited. Thou hast taken opium*, says she, in excess, for I cannot suspect a good mus-
fulman

* The eastern people make great use of opium in order to procure a sort of drunkenness.

fulman of having drank wine : Go to thy house, a little rest will calm the fever of thy brain : go, and to-morrow I shall not remember this adventure, if thou comest to see me with that respect which is due from thee to the wife of thy brother.

Shanadki took so moderate a discourse, for a proof that his rashness had not displeas'd her*, the evil spirit blew on his reins, and made him attempt the blackest and most enormous of crimes ; but Kamoula, strengthened by her good angels, snatch'd her dagger, and would have made Shanadki vomit out his guilty soul, had not fear and shame instantly abated the fury of that wicked wretch, and oblig'd him to fly out of the chamber. Dis-

* This is a Mahometan phrase.

Disappointed and confounded, he retired to his own house, filled with rage and resentment, he walked a long time alone in a garden in which he used before to take great delight; but the murmuring of the fountains, the enamel of the parterre, and the beautifully diversified apparel of the trees, far from soothing the chagrin and uneasiness which devoured him, served only to encrease them, even as the fury of the mad bull is heightened by the shining of colours, or the humming of the bee.

Shanadki, whose black soul shunned the light, shut himself up in the dullest and most retired part of his house. There, in gloomy dejection, his crime presented itself before him, attended by all its horrors: but the wicked gain
nothing

nothing by solitude and darknes; instead of the peace they seek, they imbibe the infernal suggestions of the rebel angel. It is reserved for the just and penitent alone, there to find God, Gabriel, and Mahomed, the sources of all good things.

He came from his retirement more corrupt than he entered into it, he walked anxiously about, vainly hoping to find some remedy for the intolerable violence of his distemper. He resolved to seek comfort in the pleasures of the table, and to drown his cares in the enchanting delirium of wine; thinking thereby to stifle remorse, whose loud and severe voice carried terror and despair to the very bottom of his soul.

The

The night was passed in debauch with four of his friends, whose consciences like his, wanted such an opiate to lull them to rest. But his drinking only threw oil on the fire, his despair and his rage equally rekindled, and when the fumes of the wine, like the dark vapours of a Vulcano, had mounted to his head, he lost the little reason he had left; indiscretion placed itself on his frothy lips, and he related to the company all that had happened between him and his sister-in-law.

His guests as mad as himself, threw out many gross fallies of wit against the virtues of Kamoula; and to comfort their friend under his disgrace, said a thousand extravagant things which nothing but drunkenness could suggest.

In

In proportion as they swallowed down the forbidden juice of the grape, the conversation grew warmer on the subject, but at last one of them who was the Cadi, a corrupt and covetous judge, gave a deep sigh, lifted up his eyes to Heaven, and crossing his hands on his breast; “we jest with this adventure,” said he, in a grave tone, “which nevertheless, may be attended with very dreadful consequences; for, O my dearest and most intimate friend Shanadki, thou corner of my liver, if thy sister should come to complain to me and bring two credible witnesses with her, I shall be constrained to pronounce sentence against thee, and cause thee to be impaled.”

This observation of the Cadi, in the twinkling of an eye, like a magic wand,
banished

banished the aspect of joy from the feast, and made it look as melancholy and gloomy as the mansions of the dead; a dreadful consternation immediately seized them, their moory faces became in an instant like those of the black Angels, who wait for their prey in the tomb. They interchanged silent looks, and the Cadi, pensive and melancholy remained in the position of a Bramin in an ecstasy: recovering at length by degrees from his astonishment, he resumed his discourse thus.

“O Shanadki, thou centre of my friendship and eye of all perfections, be of good cheer; true it is that a great tempest is rising against thee, but he who holds fast the end of the cable is not embarrassed, should the waves even break over his head.”

These

These words appeared like balm to Shanadki; he apprehended that the cable he must take hold of, in order to weather the storm was the Cadi himself, who he judged would not refuse him his protection if he secured his interest by a good sum of gold sequins; this hope comforted his heart, and brought back a little joy in his face.

This sudden change was not unperceived by the cunning Cadi, who found he had to do with a man of genius, who had penetrated into the hidden meaning of the speaker, through the sublimity of his expressions. He put on a more serene air, and said with a mild and obliging accent, O Shanadki, thou orchard of happiness and garden of glory, I have a secret presentiment that thy enemies
will

will be confounded, but that I may not remain in any doubt or uneasiness, relate again thy adventure to me, for perhaps in the heat of Greek wine which thou hast so liberally bestowed on us, I may not have rightly understood it : or peradventure thou thyself, to render the conversation more entertaining, hast added to the recital some circumstances which may not be true, and from which every good mussulman must shrink with abhorrence."

Shanadki plainly saw that his judge advised him to give this affair quite another turn, and not to speak of it any more with so much candour if he wished to come off well ; he therefore related it again in the following disguised manner.

C

O

O thou faithful minister of justice, thou sublime and most enlightened interpreter of the laws, thou sovereign arbitrator of the great and small!

Since thou hast suffered thy most submissive slave to open his mouth in thy presence, and to vindicate himself from the calumnies with which his reputation has been blackened; be it known unto the most magnificent Cadi, that on the 12th of the last moon at sunrise, Naider Shan, my dear brother, whom God preserve, departed for Egypt, and charged me at parting to watch carefully over the conduct of Kamoula his dear wife, whom he intrusted in my hands as the most spotless and faithful guardian of her matchless and unimpeached innocence.

Having

Having exchanged mutual embraces, we lost sight of him, I accompanied his wife to her chamber, where she desired to be left alone, that she might give full vent to her grief; this was her pretence, but it appeared afterwards that her intent was to receive in private a beautiful young Mingrelian, with whom she was enamoured. It was by the merest accident that I made this most important discovery yesterday, as I am now going to relate to you in the honest simplicity of my heart, being an utter enemy to falsehood.

I went to Kamoula's yesterday morning about the hour of prayer, to settle some domestic affairs.

I made a thorough examination into the state of the garden and house, and

gave the necessary orders for repairs, embellishments, &c. I then with the same care looked into the state of the provisions, as well necessaries as delicacies, that my sister might have nothing to trouble herself about.

Having finished my rounds, I went to the apartment of my most dear sister, I gently struck one of my hands against the other to give notice that I was at the door. A slave came and told me that Kamoula was asleep; I respectfully withdrew, and put off my visit to another day, but as I was going away I met full butt upon the stairs, a young man altogether unknown to me; he was coming up stairs, and had his sandals in his hand that he might not make a noise; surpris'd at seeing me, he instantly
turned

turned about and disappeared as swiftly as a bird just escaped out of a cage.

I immediately returned in a fury to the apartment: I opened the door without waiting for the usual formalities, and found my brother's wife very busy in adorning a turban with precious stones, which without doubt she designed for the object of her adulterous flame. Stung to the quick at so great an outrage, I loaded her with all the reproaches that fraternal tenderness could inspire.

Kamoula, all in confusion, made no answer at first but by hypocritical tears, which, far from moving my compassion, drew upon her still new marks of my indignation. She then had recourse to those devout grimaces, with which

she knows so well how to blind the credulous; she prostrated herself before the most High, and in a long prayer accompanied with the deepest groans, begged of him to break that net, which black calumny had cast over her innocence.

I was not entirely corrupted by the Syren's seducing song, but I confess my weakness; I was a little melted and disposed to be complaisant.

Kamoula, said I to her, lament thy crime, repent of thy unfaithfulness, renounce for ever the corrupter who hath seduced thee, and thy sin shall never be known but to God alone, from whom nothing can be hid; even thy husband shall continue ignorant of it for ever,

and

and thou shalt continue to enjoy his esteem, love, and friendship.

Having thus spoken, I took her hand which I kissed with transport, meaning thereby to add the chaste seal of my lips to the tender expressions of my heart.

Admire now the ingenious malice of a proud hypocritical woman, who in the midst of her debaucheries would preserve a good reputation: Kamoula, feigning herself sick, sunk down on the sofa; I stooped to raise and assist her; the noise of this alarmed her slaves, who ran to her assistance; and the false devout, pretending to escape from my arms, loudly called for help: then, snatching up her dagger, she flew at me like a fury, and would have plunged it in my breast, had I not saved myself by flight.

As I was just leaving the house, I met three of my friends walking together, to whom I related my unhappy adventure, and asked their advice. Their opinion exactly corresponded with thine O sublime Cadi! namely, that the most fatal consequences might attend this unhappy affair, unless I could bring undeniable proof, that my unworthy sister had committed adultery. As no time was to be lost to fix this proof if possible, they proposed that I should introduce them into the house by a private door; we will then slip into the apartment, says one of them to me, and we do not despair of surprizing the two lovers together, who, on thy departure, have no doubt met again, persuaded that thou durst not return so soon

soon to a place where thou hast already escaped so much danger.

I did not hesitate to lend a helping hand, towards putting in execution a plot so well contrived; I introduced them all, and they had the good fortune to find the two guilty persons together so circumstanced, as to leave no doubt of their offence.

The witnesses I have just mentioned, are ready to attest this fact, and are men of irreproachable character; thou, most illustrious Cadi, knowest them to be men of virtue, they are honoured with thy friendship; behold them now present at table, where thou hast vouchsafed to sit down and drink forbet with us; examine them; they saw every thing, they heard every thing, and are

now ready to give their evidence against the perfidious Kamoula.

The three guests, whom the knave Shanadki offered as witnesses of a fact, to which they were entire strangers, could not help admiring his ready wit; they thought themselves honoured by their friends, having so good an opinion of them, as not to fear their denying what he had said, and accordingly all three giving into his detestable design, instantly cried out, praise be to God the protector of innocence; we saw every thing, we heard every thing; long live the sage Shanadki, and speedy death to the infamous Kamoula.

In truth, said the Cadi interrupting them, I mistrusted that this nice affair was improperly related at first, but now
it

it appears with all the splendour of truth. The ingenious confession Shanadki hath made to us of his own frailty, in violently entering the sacred apartments of the women, embracing the knees, and kissing the hand of his sister, and the open candour he has shewn in declaring these faults, give great weight to the heinous accusation he has brought against Kamoula, which is greatly corroborated by the testimony of his three friends, who were so fortunately on the spot ready to be introduced into the house, at the precious moment when they had an opportunity of detecting the horrid adultery and its most hidden circumstances.

These last words which the Cadi uttered, alarmed Shanadki and his three
perfidious

perfidious witnesses : they grew pale, and discovered evident signs of emotion ; they suspected that the clear sighted Cadi had detected their villany, and considered his ironical reflections, as a proof that he intended to expose and bring them to justice for their infamous conduct.

At length Shanadki, recovering himself from his panic, suddenly started up, and addressing himself to the Cadi, I forgot, said he, to shew thee a dumb, but convincing proof of Kamoula's crime, which is a turban adorned with a string of pearls, and a purse full of gold and jewels which her gallant dropped yesterday, when our friends surpris'd him with her, and he escaped from their hands ; then, going into the
closet

closet, he immediately brings back a great purse crammed full of gold sequins, and a most superb and magnificent turban, the lustre of which dazzled the eyes of the Cadi : . most just and upright judge, says he, I now deliver up these testimonies of my innocence and Kamoula's criminality.

The Cadi laying his hands on the purse and the turban, appeared to be thunder-struck ; he paused in doubtful astonishment ; at length, recovering from his surprize, O monstrous indignity he exclaimed, O the base ingratitude of sinners, who employ in seducing women, those riches with which they are entrusted by the most high to sanctify themselves, by applying them to good works ! the magnificence and taste
with

with which this turban is adorned, afford sufficient proof that it was with a criminal design to please Kamoula ; these jewels, this gold were destined either for her seduction or recompence. Shut these scandalous objects of temptation eternally up in my coffers, that they may never again be made an impious use of by the hands of the wicked.

Sentence being thus pronounced against the confiscated effects, they were carefully wrapped up in a thin Persian silk, and put into a Cedar box, the key of which was presented to the Cadi with as much humility and concession as appears in the faces of the melancholy and desponding magistrates of a besieged place, who, after having shamefully capitulated, bring the keys
of

of the city and lay them at the feet of the conqueror.

The Cadi very gravely took possession of what he judged his perquisite, and sent the confiscated spoils to his house : after they were gone ; now I begin to recover myself said he, since I no longer behold these abominable instruments of human corruption. But dear Shanadki, cast off this melancholy gloom ; think on the happy turn thy affairs have taken, and that joy and peace which were banished from thy heart will again return to it ; behold in me the man who restores thee to the possession of that treasure without which all the riches of the world are mere baubles ; from henceforth consider me as the most liberal and best of thy friends. Shanadki
who

who had just seen such proofs of the Cadi's avarice and corruption, gave him no other answer than a bumper of Greek wine. The company now resumed their conviviality, which they continued till morning, when the Cadi, suddenly resuming his consequential gravity, arose and told them they must not indulge themselves so much in pleasure as to forget business: the mosques are now open, said he, the hour of prayer approaches; it is high time we part; I am going to give thanks to God which every living creature should do, and in two hours time I shall be on the seat of justice, where those, O magnificent Shanadki, shalt receive an exact and speedy sentence according to the witnesses you bring forward. He then departed,

departed, all the company attending him to the door with awful silence; but suddenly turning about with an air of affection, stay where you are, said he, no ceremony, you have but little time to prepare yourselves for a hearing; employ that time to the purpose in consulting well together, that you may not contradict each other in your examination, and that all appearances may be favourable to you, that I may never have cause to reproach myself, or be reproached by others, with having been deceived by the snares of imposture, and caused iniquity to be triumphant.

Shanadki and his accomplices were too far embarked in the perfidious transaction to neglect the Cadi's advice,
and

and concerted their measures accordingly. Kamoula was publicly accused, arrested by the Cadi's order, and brought prisoner into court: no aggravation was omitted in the circumstances of the accusation to establish strong indications of her crime; the witnesses, examined separately and confronted according to the prescribed rules of the court, agreed so well in the circumstances of their narrative, that the most clear sighted and unprejudiced judge would have pronounced her guilty.

It was in vain that the voice of God, explaining itself by that of the people, cried out that Kamoula was innocent of the crime laid to her charge; the Cadi was deaf; he managed the affair with so much art, and conducted himself

self with so much ability and hypocrisy, that the unshaken and pitiless constancy with which he resisted the prayers and intreaties of all the people, who begged him to have mercy on the unfortunate prisoner, was misinterpreted for the noble firmness of a just and upright judge who was convinced by the proofs brought against the culprit; and who in spite of his own natural humanity and compassion was obliged to give course to the rigour of the laws. He tore his robe, he sighed, he shed tears, and with all the outward appearances of a professed grief, he pronounced death against the unfortunate Kamoula.

When women are convicted of adultery in that country, the usual way of

D

punishing

punishing them, is to let them down into a large vault or cavern, to be devoured by a lion, which is kept there for the purpose.

To this terrible cavern, the innocent the virtuous Kamoula was conducted, she was followed by an innumerable [multitude of people, of all ages and conditions. In the midst of that anxious and compassionate crowd, she was the only person whose countenance appeared tranquil and serene: such is the effect of conscious virtue and rectitude.

Being arrived at the edge of the cavern, she prostrated herself before the most high, and made the following prayer.

“ O my Creator! always merciful,
always just! how can I render sufficient
thanks

thanks to thy divine goodness for thus calling me to the greatest recompence of eternity, by the severest trials of human life. I pass in a moment from the placid enjoyment of those temporal blessings, which thou hadst heaped upon me, to the most infamous and terrible of executions; and yet, surrounded as I am with horrors, thy comforting goodness permits me to love thee, my sovereign Lord! with a love more pure, and more inflamed than ever. Already my heart begins to enjoy the sweets of the celestial beatitude which consists in the inexpressible joy of possessing nothing, of loving nothing but thee. Not one of my attachments to life remains with me, but my tender affection for the dear spouse thou gavest me; shower
D 2 down

down thy temporal and eternal blessings on him, and grant of thy infinite mercy, that he may be convinced of my innocence !”

As soon as Kamoula had finished this prayer, she gave the signal to be let down into the cavern, which was instantly obeyed, as they were apprehensive the people would rise, and offer violence to the ministers of justice. The groans of the indignant multitude were reverberated through the air, they departed full of horror, and under that state of tumultuous agitation, which the mind experiences when it receives the impression of tragical events, without being able to penetrate into the secret cause of them.

The

The wretched Kamoula descended to the bottom of the den, where she waited with inexpressible agonies the arrival of her savage and remorseless executioner,—but no lion appeared; she earnestly implored the Almighty to encrease her courage and patience in proportion to the length of her execution, which she did not expect would have been attended with so much delay.

At length opening her half-closed eyes, she perceived at the other end of the cavern, a faint light, as if it came through a crack in the wall, but sufficient to let her see she had no lion to fear.

She approached the light, and found that a part of the arch which supported the top of the cavern had fallen in, and that the lion, the marks of whose talons

were fresh on the walls, had availed himself of that opening to escape from his prison.

Kamoula most devoutly and gratefully returned thanks to the Almighty for this signal deliverance: she placed all the stones she could find one upon another; and by this help she got high enough to fix her hands on the breach, and then by placing her feet in the holes and inequalities, which time had made in the wall, she gained the top, and took the same way the lion had done through the opening in the arch.

She had now happily surmounted the most difficult part of her escape, but the most painful remained to be overcome; for the opening was in an uncultivated part of the country, overgrown with
brambles

brambles and briars, upon which, still hung large tufts of the lion's hair, leaving evident proofs that he had gone that way. Kamoula found it impossible to retain an erect posture, she was forced to creep through the thorns on hands and knees, and received a thousand wounds and scratches from them all over her tender and delicate body, but necessity and danger giving her strength and perseverance, she courageously forced her way through this last enclosure.

The day being now far spent, she at first hastened to reach a fine house which lay to the right hand, but perceiving some little huts to the left, she directed her course to them; innocence and hospitality, said she to herself, are oftener

found under mud walls, than beneath the gilded roofs of splendid palaces.

But before she could arrive at them, her strength and spirits suddenly failed, and she fainted away at the foot of a tree, her faintness was succeeded by a profound sleep, the natural consequence of the excessive fatigue she had undergone, which continued till midnight, when an old Arabian lord passing that way, perceived by the light of the moon, the body of Kamoula stretched at length on the ground.

Behold said he, to his attendants, a woman whom robbers no doubt have attempted to murder; let us examine into this matter, that if she is dead we may give her decent burial, or assistance if still alive. He dismounted, came to
her

her, and found that she breathed ; he got some drops of balsam down her throat, and she gradually recovered her senses. As soon as she could distinguish objects, and was able to speak, O ! generous unknown, said she, leave not unfinished the good work thou hast begun ; the great and good God, hath made use of thy charity to restore my life, he will still continue it to me by thy perseverance in doing good.

Thanks to the Almighty, replied the Arabian, for having vouchsafed to make choice of unworthy me, to be the happy instrument of his mercy to the desolate and oppressed. Come with me, I am blessed with a virtuous wife, who will let thee partake of the bread of our children.

Kamoula did not hesitate to accept of an offer which she judged was directed by the hand of Providence: the Arabian called to his slaves to bring one of his camels, upon which he mounted the afflicted fair one: he then continued his journey with her, and on the twentieth day after, he arrived at his dwelling.

When he had embraced his wife and family, he presented Kamoula to his wife; behold, said he a beautiful young person whom I found one night in a desert, her delicate body torn and wounded all over with thorns, lying as if she was dead, after having with infinite pains and danger forced her way through the thorns, her strength and spirit were exhausted, and she fainted
away.

away. In this condition I found her, and having recovered her senses by the help of some drops of balm, I proposed to her to follow me; she consented, and I promised that she should partake of the bread of our children; give her then a place at our table, and command our slaves to honour and serve her with the same respect they shew us. The most high never fails to recompence every work of mercy, and we shall henceforth reap the sweetest comforts, for this Kamoula is a woman of virtue and wit; her example and discourse will be a constant treasure of advice and edification to our family.

The spouse of Hadjilbez, for that was the name of the Arabian, received the stranger with that open and unaffected

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ed politeness which prevents the object of our charity from feeling the weight and obligation of it; so that in a short time, compassion on the one side, and acknowledgment on the other, gradually expanded in the hearts of the two ladies, and formed a most strict and lively friendship between them.

But the inhabitants of the deep take no delight in fresh waters. The dove laments the loss of her rural habitation though nourished in the most superb columbary, separated from her beloved mate, she pines and languishes under the caresses of the fair hand that feeds her. So Kamoula though in the enjoyment of the most delicate hospitality, mourned her absent love, and felt to the bottom of her soul those insuperable dis-

gusts

gufts which the abfence of her dear husband gave to all the enjoyments of life. It was in vain ſhe attempted to diſguiſe this melancholy which became daily more evident. The good Arabian and his wife perceived her ſadneſs, and ignorant of the real cauſe of it, redoubled their anxious endeavours to make her happy and divert her gloomy melancholy.

Kamoula touched to the heart with an exquisite ſenſe of their paternal goodneſs to her, determined to diſcover to them, the truth of her whole adventure, which ſhe had hitherto kept a profound ſecret, fearing that a faithful recital of her hiſtory might tend to cool their friendſhip, and raiſe in their breſts a ſuſpicion of her virtue ; but when ſhe reflected

reflected that it was a sure method of convincing them of her gratitude, she no longer hesitated to discover the whole secret to them.

Her simple and unaffected narrative, heightened their compassion and tenderness for her, they embraced her with sincere affection. The knowledge we have of thy afflictions, said Hadjilbez, only serves to encrease the right which thou hast to part of the good things with which kind providence has so liberally blessed us. The goods of this world are not the property of any man ; they are entrusted by the Almighty in different hands, that they may be properly applied to relieve the wants and necessities of others , I am but the steward of what I possess ; God has placed the power in
my

my hands, thou shalt partake with my own children, I consider thee, and them, as a present I have received from his bounty, and I will make no difference between their birth and thy adoption.

Kamoula was quite overcome by this tender testimony of solid and generous friendship, founded on the most perfect virtue and religion. She therefore endeavoured to conceal her grief with more care than ever, that she might appear with a satisfied countenance, to the kind parents just given her by the divine mercy. But alas! all her care, all her precaution was in vain; her good resolutions gave way to the strong impulse of nature; and her former melancholy, insensibly crept upon her.

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The wife of Hadjilbez could not forbear reproaching her on the subject, though in the mildest and most gentle manner; and Kamoula forced by her secret grief, answered her thus.

I do not wish to deny said she, that notwithstanding the favours which thou art daily heaping upon me, notwithstanding all the kind and ingenious methods you take to comfort me, I am weary of my good fortune even in the midst of felicity; but I will seek no excuse for my ingratitude, except in thine own heart; place yourself for a moment in my situation, imagine to yourself, that I receive you into my house, and give you an asylum equal to what I now experience from your bounty. Wouldst thou think thyself happy? separated as

I am at such a distance from thy dear and respectable husband, couldst thou enjoy one moment's tranquility of mind? wouldst thou not labour under the dreadful apprehension, that the calumny which had drawn an unjust sentence on thee, would also reach his ear, and persuade him of thy guilt? alas! it was these cruel apprehensions, which caused the principal horror of the ignominious death to which I was condemned. To die innocent, said I to myself, is but to die a little sooner than the ordinary course of nature requires; there is nothing more in it: but to die loaded with the contempt and indignation of the person one loves, without ability to justify oneself, without power to convince him that we die faithful to him, and that

dying

dying we adore him alone, is surely sufficient to shake the resignation of a tender, virtuous, and delicate mind.

Condemn not then, O my kind and generous friend, condemn not that inquietude, which thou wouldst think it an honour to thyself to feel, if in my place ; pity me, but do not blame me. Allow me to-morrow to leave thee, that I may go and search for my husband in Egypt. Order thy slaves to conduct me to the first town on my journey, and God, the strength and support of those who put their trust in him, will not forsake me in so laudable an undertaking, he will give me the helps I shall stand in need of to accomplish my journey.

The Arabian lady overwhelmed with tears, at the resolution Kamoula had taken,

taken, ran to call her husband, and communicate to him the unhappy news. I confess, said she, I cannot but applaud and admire Kamoula's intention, and I own it would be injustice to attempt to divert her from it, but the causes which oblige our dear friend to be parted from us do not become the more comfortable, by being indispensable. My dear Kamoula, we are going to be separated for a long time, perhaps for ever, retain in thy remembrance the lively friendship I have for thee; remember that I am thy tender mother, and that the children brought up upon my breast, and suckled with my milk; are not tied to me by a sweeter, or more powerful sympathy. Receive my dear daughter, my last embraces; I go to order the

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things

things necessary for thy departure, I fly to quit thee, that I may no longer behold those tears that pierce me with a grief, which I am unable to resist: adieu; I leave thee with Hadjilbez, with whom thou must consult about the precautions necessary to be taken for so long and perilous a journey, as that which thou art about to engage in; my presence, my sighs and tears would but disturb a conversation in which all thy attention is necessary: Adieu, my dear daughter, adieu.—She stayed not for an answer.

Hadjilbez embraced Kamoula with a lively and consoling affection. My dear daughter, said he, we have now lived together during the space of three moons, and it has not been in my power to give thee

thee any proofs of my friendship, worthy of thy acceptance : hitherto I have only exercised the plain and common offices of hospitality, and in so doing, have performed the obligation of a faithful Mussulman, but, I am this day called upon to act the part of a good father.

When he had finished these words, he went to his closet, and presently returned with a bag of money in his hand ; there is, said he, presenting it to her, a thousand sequins, to which I shall add bills of exchange, on the richest Merchants of all the cities through which thou must pass.

Kamoula attempted to speak, but he interrupted her : God, said he, who has filled my treasure, has likewise opened my hand ; to him alone thy gratitude is

due; I go to return him thanks, for making thy virtues and necessities known to me, adieu; I commend thee to the care of him and his prophet: I withdraw to write down the road thou must take, and to give orders for the preparation of thy little equipage, at two in the morning thou wilt find every thing ready for thee. Adieu, my dear, my amiable daughter; depart without seeing me again, I should not support the fatal moment of our separation with more fortitude than thy mother. He gave her one more affectionate embrace, and then withdrew.

Hadjilbez and his wife being retired to their apartment, filled several trunks with what they considered as necessary,

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for the convenience or comfort of Kamoula on her journey.

The camels were got ready after midnight, one for her wearing apparel, another for her heavy baggage, a third for two female slaves, who were ordered to attend her ; and she herself mounted on a fourth with a black eunuch behind her, holding a parasol over her head : twelve men on foot, and four on horseback all compleatly armed, were the guard destined to escort and protect her.

The chief butler of the house, came to compliment her in the name of his lord and lady, and to apologize for their not coming to pay their last compliments to her, and kiss the hem of her garment.

Kamoula was quite overcome with sighs and tears ; her grief deprived her

of her natural eloquence, she could not utter a single word, and at last departed with an affliction equal to her silence.

On the ninth day after her departure from the hospitable mansion of Hadjilbez, she arrived at the town of Zefar; she determined to halt here some time to rest and refresh her attendants, and then send them back to the generous friends who had given them to her: she at length told them her design; it was in vain that they attempted to dissuade her from it; neither remonstrances, nor entreaties were of any avail; she remained fixed in her determination: one of her female slaves named Miraz, seeing her resolution, threw herself at her feet: thy friends, said she, would be mortally offended shouldst thou retain nothing of their
their

their liberalities; I am the least consequential of all the presents they have made thee; suffer me to accompany thee, I should otherwise be so much loss to them, for I shall die with chagrin if thou forcest me to return; Kamoula smiled and granted her request.

She retained two hundred sequins out of the thousand given her by Hadjilbez, besides some linen and a few of the plainest cloaths. She wrote to her kind benefactor, and his amiable and virtuous spouse, to return them thanks for the magnificent testimonies she had received of their affection and bounty.

I return not, said she in her letters, neither all thy gold, nor all the other presents, which thou hast heaped on me with so much munificence; I reserve a

little of each to supply my indispenfible neceffities : I return thee the fuperfluities, which would be too much for me to keep, or even for thee to part with, for opulent as thou art, thy riches are not fufficient to keep pace with the charity of thy heart, and the generofity of thy mind. To retain all the fuperfluities I now return, would be a fort of robbery committed on the neceffities of a thoufand poor, who will be relieved and comforted by what my difcretion rejects as ufelefs. Be not offended then that I reftore to thee the riches which thy liberality has fo lavifhingly beftowed on me. It is not that I am ignorant of their worth ; it is becaufe on the contrary I know their value, which being divided among feveral, a greater number of
mouths

mouths will be opened in thy praise, and encrease throughout all eternity, the treasure of thy good works.

Every thing being properly adjusted for the departure of the equipage, she sent it back by her attendants, to whom she made proper acknowledgments for the care they had taken of her: she then took a lodging with an old woman in the town, who was held in great estimation for her piety; she staid there a few days waiting the arrival of a little caravan, which was to go to Mascat, where she did not doubt of finding some mode of conveyance to Egypt.

When she arrived at Mascat, after having recovered from the fatigues of her journey, she walked about the town in search of some honest company who

were going to Egypt. As she was crossing the great square, she saw a great concourse of people assembled together: curiosity prompted to enquire the cause of this meeting, when she was informed that they were lamenting the fate of a man sixty years of age, who was just then going to be hanged, and whom they all seemed greatly to compassionate. She enquired the cause of his hard sentence, and was told that he had been a collector of the royal revenues, and that either through dissipation or negligence, he was an hundred sequins deficient in his accounts, which not being able to pay, he was condemned by the law to die.

Is it possible, said Kamoula, that this poor unfortunate man has not been able,

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in all this great city to find one relation or friend, one charitable person who would advance so small a sum to redeem him from death ! but is it now too late to relieve him ? suppose any one would now pay down the hundred sequins, would his life be now given him ? to whom must this sum be paid, and what forms must be made use of to obtain his pardon ?

It would be quite sufficient, answered one, to tender the money down at the foot of the ladder, he would not mount it were it then deposited ; and were he even on the top of the ladder he would come down a free man, provided any one would discharge the debt before he was turned off.

If that is all, said Kamoula, I will deliver that miserable creature ; she
instantly

instantly took an hundred sequins out of her purse, and in the presence of the people, counted the sum into the hands of the officer, who arrived that moment with the prisoner.

In an instant the whole place resounded with the confused voices of the multitude, crying out pardon! mercy! Heaven shower down its blessings on the kind stranger who hath thus with her own money, rescued an unhappy debtor from an ignominious death.

Kanoula's modesty was much hurt by the acclamations of the public; she covered her face with her veil, and pressing her way through the crowd, got to her lodging unobserved. She had no sooner got into the house, than she begged the good old landlady would permit somebody

body to accompany her to the next village, because, she said, the noise and bustle of the city disturbed her; the landlady instantly packed up her baggage, and went with her to the house of a relation, in the village of Kalhat, which was about a league and a quarter from the city.

Mean while the criminal whose life Kamoula had preserved, spared no pains to find his kind and generous deliverer, that he might express his great acknowledgments to her; he ran up and down looking every where for her; but as she was an entire stranger in the city, he spent two days before he could find out where she had lodged. Not meeting with her there, he enquired which way she went, and was told she was gone to
Kalhat;

Kalhat ; he accordingly made all possible haste to that village ; but on his arrival there, he was informed that she departed from that village the evening before, and the people of the house directed him to the road she had taken ; he immediately followed with all the haste he could make, and overtook her in the evening, just as she was entering the village where she intended to stay that night.

When he approached her, he prostrated himself on his face ; O ! most kind and dear deliverer ! said he, *angel of my planet, permit me to employ the life which thou hast saved in following thee as thy slave ; suffer me to attend on thee in that capacity, that by
my

the Mahometans believe that every man is directed by a
and every planet by an angel.

my attention, zeal, and submission, I may convince thee that though I do not possess riches, I possess gratitude.

Kamoula desired him to rise : whoever thou art said she, thou owest no obligation to me, being as thou art an entire stranger to me, there could be no personality in what I did for thee : but but if thou art really as thou sayest destitute of subsistence, I offer thee some sequins ; take them, and thou shalt owe me no obligation, because I do not lend, I give them to thee ; the receiver always pays the value of a present, by the honour he does the giver in accepting it.

Yek-Rahoun, for that was the name of the old man, refused the sequins so liberally offered him by Kamoula : I owe thee nothing, according to thy way of thinking,

thinking, said he to her, but according to my own, I owe thee every thing: let us then mutually accommodate each others feelings; allow my gratitude to exert itself, it will afford thee an opportunity of bestowing a new benefit, and me a pleasing method of paying my debts.

He had but just finished these words when they arrived at the caravan^{sera}*, and Yek Rahoun without waiting for an answer, began with a good grace to perform the painful office of a slave: he unloaded the beasts of burden, he went in search of food for them; he made the beds, he went to market, cooked the supper, served it up to table, and then placed

* The Mahometans have great buildings in all towns, and on the roads erected at the public expence for the reception of travellers, who find their own beds, provisions, &c.

placed himself respectfully behind his lady to observe her orders. Kamoula, whose noble heart scorned the distinctions so much insisted on by those of narrow minds, perceiving him in that posture ; I do not like, said she, to see that humiliating distinction which prejudice puts between the rich and poor ; sit down with us ; if thou art virtuous, as I have reason to believe thou art, we are on an equality.

Yek-Rahoun obeyed, and conducted himself with so much wisdom and discretion, that he acquired the inestimable privilege of placing himself at Kamoula's table ; he shewed by his behaviour, that the submission so necessary to preserve order among men, does not altogether depend on the arbitrary custom
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of separating the great from the little ; or making the slave creep under the eye of his master ; it is always in a man's power to prevent it by thinking modestly of himself.

Having refreshed themselves at the caravanera, they renewed their journey, which they continued together with so much cordiality, that they appeared like one family.

They travelled along the sea-coast, seeking a port where they might embark, and as that part of the country was but thinly inhabited, they were often obliged to sleep in the fields under tents : one evening as they stopped in a very agreeable wood, intending to make that their abode during the night, they perceived a man lying on the earth ; his face was
pale

pale and disfigured with the agonies and horrors of approaching death strongly marked in his countenance. Kamoula was the first to assist him, she dropped some precious elixir into his mouth, he gradually recovered his spirits and strength, and presently sitting up, he fixed his eyes on his fair physician : from that instant he felt a devouring flame kindle in his breast which at last overset his reason.

O divine *Houri ! said he, matchless beauty ! surely the life I spent on earth did not authorize me to hope for that beatitude after my death in which I now behold myself ! surely the answers I gave in my grave to the two angels who interrogated my soul about its faith and

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works

* A nymph of Mahomet's Paradise.

works, must have been highly satisfactory, for if *Munkat and Nekir had not thought me worthy of the most delicious rewards of eternity, should I have been now in thy arms O thou fairest of Houris? approach then with thy rosy cheeks that I may kiss them and be drunk with the joys of love.

Kamoula imagining that the disordered state which the poor man's brain was in arose from want of nourishment, directed food to be given him, and after he had taken some, they all three helped him to walk to their little camp, where good care and kind treatment recovered his strength in a few days, but his reason never returned compleatly: he

* The names of the two Angels who according to the Mahometan creed interrogate the dead, that they may distribute to them their proper rewards or punishments.

he appeared rational enough indeed when he was out of Kamoula's sight, but whenever she appeared his madness returned with accumulated violence. This was a very unfortunate circumstance to them, for she found it impossible to hide herself entirely from him: he no sooner saw her face than he prostrated himself before her on his knees, from which posture it was often difficult to raise him. One night he was so unmanageable, that they were obliged to tie him to the piquet of one of the camels.

Having by this method lost sight of the object of his violent passion, he recovered his senses and abandoned himself to that despair which must naturally arise from the ill-treatment he fancied he had met with, because he knew not the cause of

it. When morning appeared and he was untied, he suddenly went away without speaking to any one, and in his hurry left his pocket book with some papers behind him.

Yek-Raboun examined them carefully to try if he could discover the name or history of their late unhappy companion, and by a letter which appeared to be from one of his correspondents acknowledging the receipt of certain goods he concluded he was a trader who had been robbed; and that this misfortune had laid the foundation for that disorder of his brain, to which the beauty of Kamoula had given the finishing stroke. From these conjectures, as well as from some bills of expences and trade it appeared his name was Mourzib. Who-
ever

ever he was, the poor crazy fellow disappeared, and left the travellers to pursue their rout with less inconvenience.

Four days after Mourzib left them, they reached a small village three leagues distant from the port of Chegbar, where they proposed to embark. Not having far to go, and the day proving excessive hot, they determined not to finish their journey till the cool of the evening; and accordingly retired under the shade of some trees which grew on the banks of a little murmuring brook.

They had not rested themselves an hour in this agreeable retirement, when they saw a man on horse-back coming towards them, well mounted, and followed by five or six slaves on foot. He accosted them in a rude manner, and ex-

aming them carefully, I find said he I am right; here are two smart lasses, and this old buck appears to be still hearty: Come along with me my friends you shall find you are gainers by the exchange.

Kamoula with that becoming dignity which she knew so well how to assume upon proper occasions, demanded of the man by what right he presumed to take them with him? Because, replied he, you are my property; for yesterday Mourzib, a man of reputation in this country, sold to me Mamoud Kourdan, a very honest dealer in such merchandize, three slaves named Kamoula, Miraz, and Yek Rahoun, with two camels and all their baggage, without reserve. Here is the receipt properly executed, there-

therefore make no resistance but conduct yourselves with that obedience which is due to me your lord and master. Then, turning to his slaves, here, said he, take care of that old fellow and the baggage camel; go gently with them to my house; I myself will take charge of the pretty girls, to amuse them on the road, and make them forget, if possible, their late dear and honourable master the amiable Mourzib.

Kamoula in the midst of this terrible storm, behaved with her accustomed dignity; she raised her head like an unshaken rock, against which the angry waves dash themselves in vain; virtue shone refulgent in her countenance, and discovered itself in her words and actions with so much majesty, that the most

hardy love dared not reveal itself in her presence without fear and apprehension.

Before many days had passed in this manner, Mamoud Kourdan grew tired of the submissive obedience he was obliged to shew his slave in spite of his authority. These proceedings, said he, will not do for me; this imperious lady is only fit for such as have time and patience. He therefore instantly determined to sell his three slaves again, let him get ever so little by the bargain. Nor was it long ere he met with a purchaser. Addin, a famous pirate, and purveyor to the seraglios of the east, struck with the beauty and appearance of Kamoula bid money for them, and Mamoud came down to the very moderate gain of cent per cent. The bargain was struck, the
money

money paid, and the three unfortunate victims were immediately carried on board Addin's ship.

In the hands of this new master, who was accustomed from his childhood to plunder, who knew no providence but chance, no king but his will, no guide but his unruly passions, and no friend but his vices, Kamoula stood in need of preternatural assistance, and God gave it to her in proportion to the dangers she was exposed to.

The wind being favourable, Addin set sail, he had a very rich cargo on board, having laid in at an extraordinary expence not only every necessary of life, but also a large stock of such things as as intemperance alone seeks the forbidden use of, as wine, pork, and other

prohibited meats to whet his brutal appetite, palled by all kinds of debauchery.

One day having according to his usual custom drank to excess, he commanded Kamoula to be called in, and placing her by him at the table; I believe said he my pretty lass, thou art not best pleased with the indifference I have shewn thee since we have sailed together, but I intend soon to quit scores, and to make thee as happy as if thou wert in the garden of *Eram: Thy master will know no will but thine; I will be thy slave; receive these my first homages: thus saying, he offered to embrace her, but Kamoula drawing herself back from him, I am no more thy slave, said she, than thou art mine;

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* The terrestrial Paradise.

I am born free ; the traitorous Mamoud Kourdan had no power over me nor mine ; he sold to thee what did not belong to him ; thou hast therefore no right to retain what thou hast purchased illegally : It would not however be just that thou shouldest lose the money thou hast paid for what appeared to thee an honest purchase : I therefore offer to reimburse thee ; detain me in any place of security till I can write to my friends, and with their answer I shall receive the sum we agree upon : If thou hast the least grain of honour or religion thou wilt accept this offer.

Addin replied to so reasonable a reproof by bursting into a loud fit of laughter, recovering himself from which, I did not imagine said he that I was talking

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ing to one who had the gift of preaching, I thought while thou wast speaking that I heard an Iman delivering a discourse in a mosque against infidelity and atheism, but such kind of cant will not do for me; let us have no more of it; follow thy natural employment by endeavouring to please me: disperse those clouds which obscure thy moony face; here my favourite sultana, take council from this glass of wine, offering her at the same time a bumper. Kamoula with the indignity of a zealous mussulman, pushed his arm from her, and Addin with all the brutal fury of a drunkard threw the bottle at her head; but the blow was averted by the kind hand of providence.

Take

Take that as a warning, said he to her, always to be obedient to the will of thy master: but we both want rest, depart from me and return again in an hour to receive that pardon which love still solicits for thee.

The unfortunate Kamoula beheld her distressful situation with all its deepest horrors; she prostrated herself before God, who alone can protect the innocent.

While she was at prayer, a black cloud began to appear to the northward, the length of which was about twenty paces of a camel. As soon as the man in the main-top perceived that cloud, he instantly cried out several times, God assist us! God preserve us! his holy prophet intercede for us!

In an instant the winds began to roar, and the waves rose mountains high : now the ship is tossed up to the clouds, and the next moment plunged to the bottom of the deep ; from whence another wave lifts her again to the clouds ; the sails and rigging are torn to atoms before they have time to secure them ; the masts are blown overboard, and the boltsprit and rudder are forced away by the impetuosity of the waves.

In the midst of this dreadful scene of confusion and distress, Kamoula alone appeared calm and composed : her dependence was upon that providence which had so often and so signally interposed in her favour. The abandoned Addin, to animate his men, stormed, swore, and cursed like some desperate leader

leader in battle, who affecting to fear nothing in this world or the next, thinks to inspire his companions with the same ill grounded intrepidity : but mark the hand of Providence ! in the midst of his blasphemies, a wave carried him off the quarter-deck to the hottest of the eternal fires :—and now the hurricane ceases as suddenly as it began.

This awful catastrophe, together with the singular circumstances of the dreadful tempest from which they had just been so wonderfully delivered, made a powerful impression on all the ship's crew, who unanimously considered it as a miracle of God in favour of Kamoula : They therefore looked to her as a saint, and would have no other commander, wisely considering that a vessel

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fel fituate as their's was, without mafts, rigging, fails, boltsprit, or rudder, was wholly unmanageable by human art, and could only be guided by one who was endowed with the gift of miracles. Under all thefe difadvantages they arrived in nine days at the port of Gheovador in the kingdom of Beloudga, and Kamoula had fo many eye-witneffes of her conduct on board the fhip, that the fame of her extraordinary piety and fanctity foon fpread itfelf all over the kingdom.

Idolatry being the religion of the country, the people were in confequence governed by fuperftition. Kamoula knew how to avail herfelf of this difpofition, and drew from it two confiderable advantages in favour of Mahometanifm ;

metanifin: one was, that being considered by them as a divinity, they looked upon what she said as oracles; the other was, that finding them so much disposed to venerate her, it was not difficult to make them believe the alcoran, which she persuaded them was the source of all good and all merit.

Her charitable disposition likewise contributed greatly to the forwarding of her project, for she constantly visited the sick and poor, in the neighbourhood, and performed wonderful cures with her elixir, on those who renounced their idols, and confessed their belief in God and his prophet.

The king of Beloudga soon got information of all these things which he did not much credit, but that he might
put

put the matter out of doubt, and see with his own eyes, he commanded that the beautiful stranger should be brought to his court.

Kamoula was accordingly mounted on a superb Horse, attended by Miraz and Yek-Rahoun, who rode on Mules: their baggage was put into waggons, and the governor of the town marched himself at the head of an escort, that he might have the honour of presenting this holy young lady to the king.

On the fifth day after their departure, they arrived at the Metropolis of Beloudga, which was called by the same name as the kingdom; and the next morning Kamoula had the honour of a private audience at the foot of the throne.

Kamoula

Kamoula was no sooner brought into the presence of Mustif Shaddan the king, than he was astonished at her wonderful beauty. He gazed at her with the attention and eagerness of one who had found a treasure. Queen of my heart, said he to her, I no longer disbelieve the reports I have heard from all quarters of thy miraculous gifts, for surely the immortal Gods can refuse thee nothing: at thy request the God Siva* becomes angry or calm; the divine Esculapius has entrusted to thee his universal remedy, which Philosophers have so long sought after in vain; thou curest all our sick in the most wonderful manner; continue to demonstrate

* Siva is the Indian God that answers to Neptune.—Sir W. Jones's Dissertations, Vol. 1, p. 44.

to us thy fovereign power, by making that storm fubfide, which thy bright eyes have raifed in my heart: I have juft received a mortal wound from an arrow, which thy looks have fhoot at me, vouchsafe then to pour into it fome of thy fovereign balfam. When the king had fpoken thefe words he appeared to be ftrongly and paffionately agitated: he waited not for Kamoula's answer, but commanded an apartment to be prepared for her in the palace, and ordered the chief of his eunuchs to take care of her.

Love, who in the fhape of Addin the pirate had fhewed himfelf to Kamoula under fo hideous a form, appeared now to her under one lefs hateful, but not lefs dangerous, and fhe could not expect to find that relief from a tempeft in the
king's

king's court, which she had lately experienced at sea; but she still placed her confidence in the most high. The repeated experience she had had of the divine interposition in her favour in former dangers, left her no room to doubt that she would be safely delivered from those which now threatened her.

She had not been long in her new apartment when the king impatient at her absence went to see her. Being a man of great politeness, good nature, and wit, he declared his passion for her with respectful delicacy, and forbore taking any of those unwarrantable liberties which monarchs in general think their rank entitles them to take: but in proportion as his love increased, his respect decreased, though, without losing sight

of modesty. At length, the king overcome by the ardor of his passion, stretched out a bold hand: when in an instant the prophet, who from the heavens watched over the safety of Kamoula, blasted that rash arm which immediately became motionless.

The king who fed very hearty, and took but little exercise, imagined he was struck with the palsy, and cried out for help: O daughter of the goddess Sereswati*, said he, give me instantly some of thy divine elixir, and save my life.

Thou art ignorant of thy distemper replied Kamoula: Drugs will not cure it; physicians can give thee no relief;
none

* Sereswati represented with a palm leaf and a reed, is the Indian Minerva.—Sir W. JONES'S Dissertations, Vol. 1, p. 48.

none can afford thee assistance, except the Almighty whom I adore, and who now chastises thee for thy criminal passion, with which he is justly offended.

Well then replied the king, appease thy angry and jealous God, and cure me in his name with thy miraculous elixir.

Kamoula conceived hopes from this budding confidence, which the king expressed in her God, who was still unknown to him; she flattered herself that if he recovered, he might be so impressed by the miracle as to be convinced of the nothingness of his idols, and be inclined to embrace the Mussulman faith, the seeds of which, though only scattered at random, began to promise some appearance of a harvest: she

implored the divine assistance, she invoked the prophet, and administered some drops of her elixir to the king. He had no sooner swallowed them than he found the use of his arm return, and all its functions recover their full vigour.

Transported with joy he exclaimed, O thou divine woman! thou wonder of nature! thy sovereign remedy has restored me to life: that life belongs then to thee alone: all I possess is at thy disposal; from henceforth reign with an absolute power over myself and my dominions; from this time I acknowledge no other master but that love to which I give myself wholly up, that thy happiness may be compleat: thus saying he threw himself on his knees, attempting to embrace those of Kamoula, who
had

had great difficulty to repel marks of acknowledgment with which she was by no means pleased, and which now became more offensive by being more lively: but the prophet interposed a second time in favour of the distressed fair one, and behold the royal arm in a worse condition than ever.

Mustif Shaddan considered his relapse as an evident sign of his approaching death, and called for the elixir with more ardor and impatience than before.

Kamoula gladly embraced this opportunity to bring him off entirely from idolatry. The chastisement thou hast received said she, is the just reward of thy ingratitude. The God whom I serve, and who is thy God as well as mine, the creator of all men, the king

of all kings, that God through whose mercy all living creatures enjoy existence and nourishment, graciously vouchsafed to manifest himself to thee but an instant ago, in a wonderful and miraculous manner, and yet thou art hardly cured but thou fallest again into the very same transgressions which before provoked his anger against thee. Resolve then to acknowledge him for thy only God, and to disarm him of his wrath: prostrate thyself before him, adore him, and him alone. Respect the virtue of chastity which thou seest he protects and loves, and I trust he will be graciously pleased to answer thy repentance and my supplications by a speedy recovery of thy health.

This

This well timed and edifying discourse penetrated to the very bottom of the king's heart ; and the holy prophet Mahomet embracing the opportunity granted to it the power of persuasion.

After pausing some moments, I have just done inwardly, said the king; all that thou hast advised me to do : Implore thy God in my behalf, he is also my God, and give me a strong dose of elixir in his name : Kamoula administered a double quantity, and his arm was instantly restored.

So miraculous a demonstration of the power and mercies of the true God could no longer be resisted ; the king was convinced and converted. He entirely gave up his unruly love as a proof of his

faith; and expressed no other sentiments to Kamoula but what arose from the strictest honour and virtue. He allowed her to depart from his palace, which she quitted that instant, determined the king should never see her again, until he had compleatly conquered and triumphed over his passion.

Kamoula was now pestered with solicitations from all the lords of the court, and chief inhabitants of the city, who were all anxious that she should take up her abode with them; but she modestly refused all their kind offers; at length a man bending under the weight of years, and held in high estimation for his wisdom and piety, brought the keys of his cottage and laid them at her feet: The saints delight, said he to her, to dwell
in

in the habitation of the poor : my house affords nothing but what is indispensibly necessary to supply the wants of nature ; all the pomp and magnificence of my poor apartment consists in neatness ; an humble mat of rushes fabricated by these hands covers my sofa and my floor ; my table affords no delicacies nor dainties except the pulse and fruit of my garden ; my drink is supplied by a fountain which is always liberal of its stores ; and my poverty has removed far from me all sorts of dissolute or dangerous neighbours, even as the wind purifies the air from its noxious and malignant vapours ; my retirement is unmolested, neither the envious, the libertine, nor the covetous ever approach it.

The

The asylum thou offerest me, said Kamoula, is in my mind to be preferred to the most sumptuous palaces; I gladly accept thy kind offer, and will fix my abode in this delicious retirement; but it shall be only upon condition that thou continuest to inhabit it with me; for it is thy virtue which renders the place into which thou art about to receive me of such inestimable value.

Himiri, which was the old man's name, having promised her that he would not leave his house, she followed him thither attended by Miraz and Yek-Rahoun.

The king was astonished when he heard Kamoula had made choice of so poor a house to dwell in; unwilling however to put any constraint upon her

he

he sent her a large sum of money in order that she might be enabled to build on the spot which seemed to have taken her fancy so much, and that she might purchase the ground about it; and gave orders to those who possessed the places she fixed on, to sell them if she wished it.

Kamoula refused the king's intended present with the most becoming modesty, neither would she accept of a box of jewels which he likewise sent her. I do not want any of these things said she to the person who brought them; this world which appears to us so large, and which the ambitious are so desirous of possessing, is but a small portion of the vast universe; every individual which enters into this part of it, has a right to a certain

certain

certain portion for its subsistence ; and in that portion the Almighty has destined a place for each man to set his foot, and lay his head on : the body of the greatest monarch takes up no more room than that of his meanest slave : as to myself I enjoy in common with other creatures all that is necessary for me, my desires extend no farther.

As for these ornaments so much prized by the world which the king has been pleased to send me, I cannot make any use of them, I wish for no other jewels at my ears than the discourses of the wise, and the complaints of the wretched : And when my hands has an opportunity of opening itself to the wants and necessities of the poor, it is much better adorned than if it was loaded with the
most

most valuable rings or bracelets. Notwithstanding all this to convince the king that I am disposed to submit to his royal commands, I will with pleasure receive from his majesty, a moderate alimentary allowance, that it may be in my power to assist such of our brethren as God gives us to feed, to whom I cannot refuse alms without exciting in them those expressions of impatience and disappointment, which make the indigent lose the merit of their condition.

Such virtuous and elevated sentiments; a conduct full of humility and edification, joined to a charity which knew no bounds, secured to Kamoula the veneration and love of all the people, and the fame of her sanctity was published to all the corners of the east.

When

When Kamoula saw that the king's perseverance in his respect for her, and the general esteem of the public, which she had so deservedly gained, had placed her beyond the dread of any future violence, her tender regard for her dear absent husband, regained its wonted ascendancy in her heart, and the ardent desire of seeing him again occupied all her thoughts, having however gained experience by her past misfortunes and miraculous escapes, she did not think it right to expose herself to fresh ones, by attempting a second journey before she had concerted proper measures to ensure the success of it; the first and most essential of which was to know, whether Nadir Shan was still in Egypt, or whether he was returned to his own country;

country ; to gain this necessary piece of information, she sent off two expresses ; one for Arabia, the place of her nativity, the other for grand Cairo, in Egypt, with necessary instructions and letters to ensure the success of their commissions.

The messenger who was sent to Arabia, never arrived there, having perished at sea : the other who went to Egypt, learned that Nadir Shan had set out on his journey to Arabia a month before the messenger's arrival. We will therefore follow him thither, and leave Kamoula for a while in the peaceful possession of her beloved solitude.

Notwithstanding that faithful husband had received no news of his beloved Kamoula, during the long period of his absence,

absence, he comforted himself with reflecting on the difficulty of sending letters so far, and that only by the hands of travellers who might be stripped on the road, or hindered by sickness, neglect, infidelity, or death : these reflections furnished him with some consolatory hopes which prevented his restless love from falling into despair.

When Nadir Shan came within a day's journey of his house, he slackened his pace that he might not arrive until the middle of the night, proposing to himself a most diverting scene, arising from that pleasant confusion, disorder, and bustle, which naturally take place in a family at the unexpected return of their master.

At

At length he arrives at his house ; he dismounts from his horse ; he knocks at the gate ; no one answers ; he becomes impatient ; he knocks louder and louder ; a slave within demands who is there and what is his business at that unseasonable hour ? Nadir Shan declares his name, and commands him to open the gate ; immediately the slave strikes the *tehadmac ; lights a wax taper ; runs from chamber to chamber all over the house to awake the servants, and pronounce the arrival of his master. Every one hurries on his cloaths and descends into the court with a flambeau in his hand ; at length the gate is opened.

Nadir Shan enters, and amongst a croud of servants much more numerous

* A steel to strike fire with.

than he left at his departure, observes a blind man supported under the arms, whom he does not at first sight recognize to be his brother: but it is he, the treacherous Shanadki.

Every countenance betrayed marks of the most frightful consternation; all cast down their eyes and an awful silence prevailed throughout. These alarming marks of the most profound sorrow are so many daggers to the breast of Nadir Shan, who considered them as denoting some fatal accident which he could not understand: But observing that neither Kainoula nor any of her slaves came to meet him, he no longer doubts of her being either dead or dying: He attempts to go directly to her apartment; the servants prevent him; alas! then, said

faid he, it is all over! I have loft all that was dear to me! then cafting himfelf on Shanadki's neck, diffemble not with me faid he; tell me the whole truth; hide not from me the moft cruel circumftances attending my misfortune, glut my foul with the moft fubtile and fatal poifon of deſpair, that I may die the fooner and be reunited in the tomb to my deareſt Kamoula.

Having pronounced theſe words he went directly to his cloſet, whither his brother followed him by the aſſiſtance of his guides. The door being ſhut, Shanadki began in the following terms.

Why doſt thou my deareſt brother, my ſincere friend, the man whom I reſpect the moſt of all the men upon the earth, why doſt thou ſo ill requite the

tenderness I bear for thee, as in thy eager desire for death to make choice of me for thy executioner. In relating to thee without disguise the melancholy, the tragical history of thy wife, I shall plunge a dagger into thy heart: eye has not seen nor ear heard any thing so detestable as the odious fact, the circumstances of which I am now about to relate. Ah! brother, interrupts Nadir Shan, forbear to prolong my wretched existence, but finish me with a single stroke, it will be an act of mercy.— Know then replied Shanadki that thy wife was convicted of adultery, and by sentence of the judge thrown to be devoured by the lion.

On hearing this sad recital, Nadir Shan remained motionless and silent; but

but after some moments recovering himself; no, said he, she was innocent; they condemned her unjustly: perish the caluminators that swore against her! who are they? where are they? who is the unjust judge that disgraced his sacred office by lending his ministry to the black fury of our enemies? but as for thee my brother! thee, to whose friendly care I committed the preservation of my dear Kamoula, why didst thou forsake her? why didst thou not employ all thy credit, and all my fortune to defend her innocence?

The clear conviction I had of her guilt, replied Shanadki, put it out of my power to attempt her defence: Heaven knows the violence I committed on my own feelings when I found my-

self called upon to to prosecute her in vindication of thy offended honour! No grief could equal mine on that dreadful occasion: the floods of tears I poured from my eyes were incessant; and so sharp and bitter were they, that I became blind in an instant on the very day of her execution.

What cursed magician, then, demands Nadir Shan, could bewitch the eyes and corrupt the heart of Kamoula? All the monarchs of the east, even love himself would have attempted to please her in vain! The seducing magician replied Shanadki, was a young man of most ravishing beauty whom I met here on the stairs, and who was surpris'd with her by three irreproachable witnesses; but he escap'd from them and vanish'd
with

with the agility of a spirit of the air, and has never been heard of since, notwithstanding the strictest search has been made after him.

Were the judge and witnesses, demands Nadir Shan, any of my acquaintances? or had they any pique against me? No replies the brother, thou hadst some regard for Mourzan the judge; and Sadaz, Benzabed, and Kilap thy good neighbours were the witnesses whose evidence convicted thy wife.

True it is, said the wretched Nadir Shan, that I never was at variance with either of them: I am nevertheless so fully convinced of the innocence of my dear Kamoula, that when I meet them I shall not be able to refrain from shewing them strong marks of my resentment.

Thou wilt have no trouble of that kind said Shanadki, for lord Mourzan was torn in pieces and devoured by a lion in a neighbouring forest some months ago; and the three witnessess were all crushed to death by the fall of the portal of a mosque, just as they were going together to morning prayers.

Thou art then the only remaining object of my chagrin and resentment, said Nadir Shan: it would be too great a violence offered to my patience to allow thee to continue in my presence, and it is impossible thou couldest be happy in mine; let us then separate brother; return to thy house, and take thy slaves and all thy train with thee; as for me I will remain here with no companion but grief.

Shanadki

Shanadki received this command from his brother with a secret joy ; his wounded and guilty conscience stood in need of such a balm, and he instantly withdrew from the presence of his brother.

From that moment Nadir Shan determined to give himself up to all the horrors of solitude, he commanded his slaves never to shew themselves in his presence unless they were called for, and ordered that no one should be permitted to see him, either on visits, business, or any pretence whatever.

In this unhappy manner he spent nearly two months, entertaining himself every day with meditating on his own wretched situation, and endeavouring to search into the truth of this most myf-

terious affair, which appeared to him through the dark veil of impossibility.

His melancholy and chagrin encreasing daily, he at last became so violently disgusted with the place in which he had enjoyed the company of his dear Kamoula, and where she was no longer visible, that he determined to sell his house, and all his possessions in that country.

Uncertainty and precipitation are the natural attendants on those excessive griefs with which we are sometimes overwhelmed. Nadir Shan sold all his possessions without having once considered where he should retire to. At length he determined to go to the island of Nedget, with no other view than that he might be removed to a considerable
distance

distance from the wretched scene of all his woes.

He ordered his servants to make preparations for his immediate departure, and notwithstanding the repugnance he felt within himself at the idea of seeing his brother, he went to take his leave of him. He found him sitting alone in his chamber with his face to the wall, and his back to the window, as forsaken and abandoned as a blind beggar that sits by the way side asking alms. He was moved with pity at seeing him in that unhappy condition, and having after the usual compliments informed him of his intended departure; thy deplorable situation, said he, brings a thought into my head which I cannot help communicating to thee.

I am determined to spend the remainder of my wretched days in the solitary island of Nedget; and I am informed that in another great island not far from it, lives a pious woman who performs wonderful miracles, and by way of excellence is called the saint. As I travelled hither from Egypt, I found on my road, an infinite number of sick of all sorts who were going to present themselves before her, with a full dependence on being healed even by her breathing upon them: I likewise met with several men of apparent credibility, who assured me upon oath that they had been with the well-beloved of the prophet, for so she is likewise called, and that she perfectly cured the paralytic, the lame, the deaf, the dumb,
and

and the blind, by only sprinkling on their lips a few drops of a celestial dew, gathered without doubt in the *Raoufa of the prophet : therefore brother, continued Nadir Shan, as that holy woman has the precious gift of working miracles, I advise thee to go and prostrate thyself at her feet : she will appease God, if thy blindness is a punishment for some great crime thou hast committed ; and if on the other hand thy distemper is but natural, this faint will restore to thee thy sight with the greater ease.

Shanadki troubled with the gnawings and upbraidings of his guilty conscience, remained sad and pensive, and as he made no reply ; I plainly see continued
Nadir

* Mahomet's Garden.

Nadir Shan, the cause of this embarrassment : thou art afraid to trust thyself to the mercy of thy slaves, who in so long a journey, might avail themselves of the helpless condition thou art in, and thine incapacity to guard against their abuses. But behold now the remedy I offer thee ; to-morrow I depart from hence ; thou shalt accompany me, and I promise to see thee safely landed in that great island which is the abode of the saint : God grant that the purity of thy conscience may be such, as to facilitate the recovery of thy sight, and that thou mayst be able to find thy way back to thine own house in peace and safety !

Shanadki did not doubt from his brother's moralising, that he suspected him of being concerned in Kamoula's death ;

death; he therefore thought that to refuse the journey just proposed to him, would be a tacid confession of his guilt, and put him out of all hopes of being cured by the saint's intercession; he therefore accepted of his brother's offer, and they set out on their journey together the next morning.

During their journey, which took them seven moons to accomplish, strange revolutions happened in Beloudga, the island to which they were bound.

Mustif Shaddan the king died suddenly in consequence of excessive eating, notwithstanding the repeated lessons of temperance which Kamoula gave him. As the succession to the crown was elective and the throne might be filled by one of either sex, the people from their
pro-

professed veneration for Kamoula, unanimously chose her for their queen.

She modestly declined their offer, and refused the sceptre as being too heavy for her hand to wield. The number of men who are capable of ruling, said she, is great; choose the most worthy from amongst them: wherever I have been, I have always heard learned men, philosophers, and even dervises cry whenever they spoke of public affairs, “were I king I would reform such an abuse, I would not undertake this, I would not do that;” now when I shall be surrounded with the splendour of the throne, these wise critics will instantly spy out those defects, which the obscurity of my present condition conceals from their view: is it not then more
honourable

honourable in me, to let them believe by refusing the crown, that I was worthy of it, then by accepting it, to convince them I did not deserve it ?

But the humility of Kamoula served only to convince the people more and more of her fitness to reign, and to make them entertain great hopes of the wisdom and mildness of her government.

It was in vain that she resisted ; the people hurried her away to the temple to proclaim her queen ; and she artfully availed herself of this opportunity to make them receive the holy truths contained in the Alcoran. I could not receive said she, as a pledge of your fidelity and obedience, the oath you should take to me in the name of your idols, since I do not acknowledge them

as Gods : neither would that which I might take to you in maintenance of your laws and privileges bind my conscience in the least, if I had none but your chimerical divinities to swear by. Hear me then O people whom I love and respect ; there is but one God, the creator of all the worlds, and all men, every thing exists by his power and mercy alone : this God I adore ; it is by his divine aid that I cure your infirm, your sick, and your lame ; the Alcoran is his holy law, and Mahomet is his prophet. Your deceased sovereign whose memory is dear to you, acknowledged and worshipped this God ; follow his example then, and I will undertake to govern your kingdom, under a full persuasion that the Almighty will grant
me

me all the assistance I shall stand in need of to make you happy.

As soon as she had done speaking, the people all exclaimed with one voice, the God of Kamoula is the only God, the Alcoran is his law, and Mahomet is his prophet.

A croud of persons of all ages and distinctions whom the queen had cured of various diseases, which had been pronounced incurable by the physicians, instigated by a holy zeal, forced their way into the temple, and broke the idols in pieces.

This violent proceeding called forth the priests and sacrificers, who taking their knives, and other instruments of sacrifice, put themselves in a posture of defence; and much blood must have
I been

been shed, had not the queen prevented it by the following most gracious speech.

“It is not my wish or intention, said she, to force any man’s conscience : If there are any among you who desire to live and die in the darkeness of idolatry, let them do so ; but I will acknowledge only those for my true subjects who will sincerely renounce falsehood, and with me embrace the truth, let these separate themselves from the rest, and range themselves in the *Bazar on the †left side ; I will there receive their oath of fidelity ; let the others assemble themselves on the right, and I will acquit them of all services and obligations due from good citizens to their king and
coun-

* The Market-place. † Among the Mahometans the left is the most honourable side.

country. They shall be entirely at liberty to select from among their wooden and brazen Gods him whom they judge fittest and ablest to govern them, to settle their differences, to give comfort and relief to their miserable and their sick, and in a word to secure to them the blessings of peace and plenty."

When Kamoula had ended this speech, she went directly to the Bazar, followed by an immense multitude; the sacrificers likewise went thither with great ostentation and confidence, convinced that the majority of the people would assemble on their side; but they were disappointed in their expectations, and saw with extreme confusion that they were left abandoned and alone; they therefore made a virtue of necessity, and to

avoid being insulted, mixed with the croud, and added their voice to the general acclamations of the people.

The queen determined not to lose an opportunity from which she saw so great advantages might be drawn to the glory of the most high and his prophet, caused herself to be immediately crowned before she left the Bazar, without waiting for the usual ceremonies, being desirous to command as sovereign from that day forward, that she might keep the intrigues and cabals of the idolatrous priests within bounds. Her wise intentions were crowned with success, paganism was annihilated, and the Mussulman religion received by all the people.

Kamoula was now become absolute mistress of a flourishing kingdom, she
was

was adored by her subjects, and respected by foreigners; yet still she sighed day and night for her dear absent husband. But amidst all her distress she looked upon the miracle which had placed her on the throne, and all her misfortunes and long separation from her spouse, as the dispensations of the divine will, wisely directed to bring about the great event of the establishment of the Mussulman religion, in the kingdom over which she was sovereign. This train of reasoning encouraged her to hope, that now every thing regarding the faith was accomplished, it would please the Almighty to restore her husband to her.

In firm reliance on the providence of God, she wrote to Nadir Shan to come to her; the letter was tender and mov-

ing, and contained a full account of all her adventures; she accompanied this letter with several rich presents, and entrusting it to the care of the faithful Yek-Rahoun, dispatched him with it to Arabia, attended by a train and equipage worthy the ambaffador of fo great a queen.

Yek-Rahoun departed on this important embaffy without delay, and arrived at the port of Gheovader in order to embark for Arabia felix: he had not been long there before he was informed that a rich Arabian lord had juft landed with a numerous retinue, and was to depart from thence the next morning for Beloudga. He gave God thanks for an accident from which he thought he might poffibly learn fome news of Nadir Shan,

Shan, and whether he was still in Arabia : He therefore ordered some of his most intelligent domestics to find out the name and country of this foreign lord.

The messengers presently returned to him with the pleasing intelligence, that the name of the stranger was Nadir Shan, that he was a widower by a catastrophe which his attendants would not explain ; that his inconsolable grief for the loss of his wife had made him quit Arabia felix, where he lived in the highest stile of grandeur in a most superb palace, the sight of which he could no longer endure after her death. In short they learned that the lady whose loss he so deeply lamented, and whose beauty, virtue, and merit, they extolled without

I 4 bounds,

bounds, bore the same name as the queen of Beloudga.

Yek-Rahoun, to whom Kamoula had disclosed the whole secret, when she honoured him with the commission he was charged with, needed no farther explanations; he entertained no doubt that the strange traveller was the identical dear husband who was the object of his embassy.

He therefore dispatched a pompous deputation of his principal officers to him, to demand audience for an ambassador from the queen of Beloudga.

Who I! answered Nadir Shan, give audience? an Ambassador to me! what can be the meaning of all this? do they take me for a madman, or some prince in disguise, whom chance has made me resemble

resemble ? I'll instantly go and disabuse your master : so saying, he left his apartment abruptly, and prevailed on them to conduct him to his excellency's abode.

Yek-Rahoun apprised of his visit, received him with all possible marks of the most profound respect.

The surprize of Nadir Shan encreased every instant : He imagined all this was a dream ; he thought he was transported by the genii into some enchanted island : But he was quite at a loss what to think when the ambaffador having with much ceremony conducted him into his closet harrangued him in form, and produced his credentials. He told him he must receive them, open them, and read them : What language can describe the

sensations of his heart when he saw the letter was signed by these words, Kamoula thy faithful wife, queen of Beloudga.

He instantly recognized her writing, blessed her rosy fingers, and the brilliant pearls of her style: but still as it were doubting of the reality of what he saw; art thou not said he to the ambassador, the great Shabbal king of the genii that presentest this delicious vision before my eyes, to make me forget the torture which pierces my breast?

Be assured I am not Shabbal, replied the ambassador, and that thy doubts may give way to conviction, peruse this other letter which my august queen has commanded me to deliver to my lord: Thou wilt find it contains a faithful

nar-

narrative of her history, which will disperse those clouds which now obscure thy sight, and cause them to vanish before the bright light of truth. So saying, he presented him with the letter, and then left him alone that he might with the greater freedom give way to the different impressions it must unavoidably make upon him.

As soon as Nadir Shan had perused the letters, his dejected grief instantly gave way to the most lively joy: He opened the door of the closet, and perceiving Yek-Rahoun who rose from a sofa to join him, he ran with open arms to meet him: wilt thou said he compleat my felicity, let us this instant go to Kamoula.

We

We will depart without delay my illustrious lord, replied Yek-Rahoun, and would to God that we could travel as fast as thought or desire! or that I were the great Shabbal to transport thee by the assistance of the genii! but thy love and my zeal will remove all obstacles.

They accordingly determined to mount their horses that evening accompanied only by four attendants and left directions for their domestics and equipage to follow them by easy journeys.

The greatest embarrassment Nadir Shan felt was, how to dispose of his unworthy brother, of whose crime Kamoula's letter had informed him: He was often tempted to poignard him, but was dissuaded from it by the wisdom of
Yek-

Yek-Rahoun, who advised him to dissemble his fury, and give orders for his brother to be conducted to the queen, that her majesty might have the disposal of his fate. Care was likewise taken to forbid all the attendants ever to mention the name of Kamoula in his presence, but to talk in general terms of the holy woman and her miracles: for they apprehended that should he suspect the truth, he would be tempted to destroy himself.

Nadir Shan even forced himself much against his inclination to make him a visit, when he told him that he was going before to kiss the robe of the saint, and to supplicate that she would entreat the most high to restore to him his sight.

The

The queen's husband and her ambassador set out on their journey at five the same evening, and on the third day arrived at Beloudga.

During the time of their journey, the queen had dreamed the same dream for three nights successively, from which she presaged some extraordinary event: she dreamed that an eagle having a nosegay of pomegranate blossoms in his beak, and a serpent in his talons, let the nosegay fall into her lap, and the serpent at the foot of her throne: she was pondering on this most extraordinary dream, which greatly occupied her thoughts, when Nadir Shan and Yek-Rahoun presented themselves before her.

And is this a dream too! said she.—
But alas! were it but the shade of my
dear

dear husband I must adore it!—but it is he!—it is he himself!—she flies to him,—he throws himself on his knees,—she stoops to take him up,—their lips meet each other,—’tis thee my dear lost husband that I see, that I embrace,—yes, ’tis thy faithful, thy tender husband;—they both speak together,—in short, words cannot describe the scene. Miraz and Yek-Rahoun, who were the only witnesses of this tender interview were melted into sympathetic tears of joy, and so much were they affected, that they found themselves obliged to withdraw.

All the nobility and different orders of the kingdom hastened to court, to congratulate Kamoula on this very interesting occasion, she presented Nadir Shan to them, and they were so struck with
his

his person and majestic air, that to the title of prince which they had given him, they added the character of †Beglerbeg of the empire.

Kamoula was highly pleased with this proof of their affection, which gave her the more satisfaction, as it seemed to be an opening for the design she had formed of abdicating the throne in favour of her husband. To forward which by rendering him more agreeable to the public, she entrusted to him the sacred deposit of the sick and poor, the widows and orphans, which she had hitherto kept in her own hands as being the noblest prerogative of sovereignty: she gave him a commission under the title of superintendent of good works, to receive
and

* † Vice-Roy or Vicar general.

and report the petitions of the unfortunate and miserable, and to distribute the royal bounties destined for the reward of the virtuous.

It so pleased the divine providence that the first two persons who presented themselves to Nadir Shan, after he had taken possession of his new office, to implore the aid of the holy woman, were the blind Shanadki his brother, who arrived at Beloudga just at that time, and the treacherous and ungrateful Mourzib who sold Kamoula to Mamoud Kourdin, and who was punished the very same day for his detestable crime by having sight taken from him.

They were both lodged in the palace in an apartment kept for that purpose, until the queen pleased to admit them
to

to her presence. The day being fixed she commanded them to be brought to a public audience. She viewed them both very attentively, she remembered them, and addressed them in the following manner.

Your afflictions are great, because your offences are enormous; I am well acquainted with the crimes of both, they are written plain in your foreheads: As for thee Mourzib, thou hast sold three persons, two women, and a man, over whom thou hadst no right: And thou Shanadki hast accused of adultery, and caused to be condemned to an ignominious death, a lady of irreproachable character, against whom thou hadst nothing to alledge but her wisdom and her virtue. I expect each of you to confess the
most

most aggravating circumstances of your crimes, concerning which I will be silent, only to leave you the merit of declaring them; and thereby appeasing your offended God by that mortifying act of humiliation.

The two blind men hearing these words of Kamoula, had not the least doubt but that God had revealed every circumstance to her, and therefore, filled as they were with awful terror and respect, they dared not hide nor dissemble any thing, fearing they should thereby add weight to the avenging hand of the most high, which was already so heavy upon them.

Mourzib spoke the first: O divine lady said he, inspired by the Almighty! beloved of the prophet! it is but too true

K

that

that I sold three free persons and their equipage, but what renders that action still blacker and more execrable is, that it was to them I was indebted for my life.

Shanadki, encouraged by the example of Mourzib, interrupted him, and with a voice half stifled with sobs and sighs, which shewed the horror and confusion of his soul, my crimes are of a much blacker dye, said he, that man is an angel compared to me. I attempted to corrupt the most virtuous of women, and full of brutal rage and resentment at being repulsed by her, I fabricated a most horrid and false accusation against her: I procured witnesses, I bribed an iniquitous judge: in short, I was the cause of her being condemned to death,
and

and that woman was my own brother's wife, with the care of whom I was entrusted in his absence: Having said these words he fainted away.

Kamoula rejoiced at his repentance, immediately assisted him: she gave him some of her elixir, and put some of it on his eyes; and she treated Mourzib with the same humanity. Presently the films fell off from their eyes, their sight was restored, and Kamoula was the first object they had the happiness to behold: they both threw themselves at her feet which they bathed with their tears, and the good queen was so moved with sympathetic compassion that she could not restrain her's: She then made them rise, and commanded them to praise and thank the Almighty, the honour and
K 2 glory

glory being due to him alone: she entreated her husband to pardon Shanadki, and receive him again into his friendship, and assured him that she freely forgave him.

The people who were assembled in great numbers, struck with astonishment at the miracles they had just seen performed, made the roof of the palace resound with their acclamations of wonder and joy. Every one wrote his absent friends an account of the miracles he had been witness to, so that in a short time there was not a person in the kingdom who did not consider the queen as inspired by the Almighty, which more and more increased the veneration they had for her, and produced in their hearts an entire submission to her commands, which

which they naturally considered as so many emanations from the Deity himself.

A tyrannical prince would have been glad to have seized such an opportunity of establishing an absolute monarchy: Kamoula on the contrary made no other use of it, than what tended to the good of her subjects: she made wise and severe laws for restraining all sorts of violence, insolence, and pride: and for providing subsistence for the poor: in short she made laws to restrain her own authority, that should her successors prove either avaricious or sanguinary, they might not be able to abuse the sovereign power with which they were entrusted. A moderation so generous, and affections so tender, rendered her more absolute than ever.

Having settled matters thus, she summoned all the orders of the kingdom, and as soon as she had got her new laws confirmed by the assembly, she descended gracefully from the throne, laid her crown and sceptre on the steps, and standing at the foot of it, made the following speech to the assembly.

“ My beloved people, who have looked up to me as your mother, and whom I have regarded as my children, it was for your sake alone that I was persuaded to leave the delightful retirement in which I had shut myself up to adore and contemplate the mercies of my creator: it is by this divine assistance that I have been enabled to support the heavy weight of government; I have demolished your abominable idols, and by the infinite
grace

grace and goodness of divine providence, you now enjoy the light of his holy law."

"All these wonderful events were written by the angels in the great *nar-sib, that book of truth which records all the events of human life. Your unalterable destiny being now so far accomplished, it is not in my power to render you more services: I am therefore going to return with my husband to our native country, there to spend the rest of our lives in sublime contemplations, and religious exercises: there with †hands joined over my head, I will never cease to implore the most high that he will shower down the choicest of his blessings on the people of Beloudga."

* The book of fate, according to the Mahometan system.

† This is a custom practised by the Mahometans in their most ardent devotions.

The whole assembly instantly arose, and a tumultuous murmur was heard throughout.

The people would not suffer Kamoula to depart: the principal lords guarded her themselves; they obliged her to remount the throne; mean time they assembled in divisions to vote; the high-chancellor collected the suffrages and declared that the nation unanimously supplicated and entreated the queen to keep her crown: and to ease her of the load of government, they associated the prince her husband, with her; and farther to give their most gracious sovereigns the most unequivocal and solid marks of sincere love and esteem, and to secure the happiness of the kingdom for ever, the states unanimously agreed to give

give up their right of election, in favour of the children which might be born of their majesties, and their posterity male and female in perpetual succession for ever.

It was not in Kamoula's power to resist an offer by which the crown was to become the birthright of her descendants for ever; she accepted it therefore without hesitation for her husband, herself, and her posterity.

A day was fixed on for the king's coronation, which the astrologers declared would prove happy to their majesties, and the joyful ceremony was performed with the greatest magnificence, never did the people manifest so lively a joy on any former occasion.

The king gave his brother Shanadki all the immense riches he had brought with him, and allowed him to return home.

The venerable sage Himri, to whose peaceable dwelling Kamoula retired when she left the royal palace, was appointed grand vizir, or prime minister of state.

The queen in the height of her elevation and happiness did not forget her father and mother by adoption from whom she had received such paternal kindness: She dispatched an ambassador to Hadjilbez and his wife, loaded with the richest and choicest presents, to enquire after their welfare, and make them acquainted with her present situation. Her faithful slave Miraz delighted with the idea of once more seeing her
old

old master and mistress petitioned that she might accompany the embassy. The good queen granted her request and loaded her with presents, telling her that should she feel herself, disposed to return to her court she might depend on meeting a fortune suitable to her merit.

Kamoula had perceived so many marks of a good heart in Yek-Rahoun and he had given her so many proofs of a disinterested gratitude that she recommended him strongly to the states, who without hesitation unanimously requested that her majesty would be graciously pleased to put him at the head of the treasury, where by his trusty and wise application of the revenue, he soon deservedly gained the universal applause of the people, and sufficiently convinced every

every one that no misconduct of his own had brought on him that ignominious sentence of death from which he was rescued by the charity of the kind and beneficent Kamoula. The amiable king and queen lived to see their children's children, and their illustrious and virtuous descendants following the steps of their worthy ancestors continued to reign for many ages in Beloudga, with uninterrupted peace and prosperity, beloved by their subjects, respected by their allies, and feared by their enemies.



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